

Present: Rick Gardner, Deb Cary, Karen Rossow

Missing: Kim Houde, Kelton Burbank

Meeting began at 7:10 p.m.

1. Minutes from December were approved.
2. Landowner Information Session:
 - Deb will continue to work to send information packets to the out of town landowners whose cards were returned as undeliverable.
 - Rick will try to get information into Redemption Rock News in March (next issue).
3. Trail Around Princeton (TAP) update:
 - Fieldstone Farm/Calamint Hill trails have taken priority over other new trail walks. Deb and Rick plan to walk these on Thursday (2PM)
 - Still need to set up two walk throughs:
 - i. Goodnow Park area, preferably with Laura Gal who has indicated a willingness to allow a trail through along the back wall of the Gal property.
 - ii. From Gleason Road, just west of Keyes brook, up to the trail that connects to the AT+T line. Rick will work to schedule these after FF trail work calms down a bit.
 - Kelton is trying to close the loop with the Clearings. We'd like to get a formal OK from them before we count on using the trail. If they say yes, then we can re-approach the Goodnows. Kelton suggested that he and Kathy Getchell can talk with the Goodnows to see if we can get their agreement to allow use of the Johnnie G trail through to Whitaker lane (this also goes through DCR land).
4. Princeton Hikes! Program:
 - Program continues, next hike is this Saturday at Wachusett Meadow.
 - Brochure is ready for printing. One last review with Su from Audubon on graphics. Then will send to Park Print.
5. Fieldstone Farm Update:
 - APR is done and this project is completed!
 - The trail between Audubon and Route 62 near Calamint Hill Road North has been cut but is still rough. It can be walked.
 - Rick and Brian Keevan have been working on Calamint Hill trails. Two projects are being worked with the Princeton Conservation Committee:
 - i. Trails on the West Side are being designed to accommodate all non-motorized traffic. These are entirely outside of the wetlands, and Rick has filed an RDA (this is a request for ConCom to agree that no wetlands are involved) with ConCom which will be reviewed next Tuesday. We hope for early approval so that we can begin to construct trails.
 - ii. Trails through the wetland and over to loop on the East side will require a Notice of Intent (NOI), which will require a letter to abutters, a public hearing, and a more complex approval process. Rick has drafted the NOI and will be working to schedule the public hearing,
 - The west side trails will require five bog bridges at a cost of around \$2,000. We have agreed to raise private funds for this rather than to go for a Mass Trails grant.

- Rick walked these trails with Dick O'Brien (experiences trail and wetlands person who works with Mass Trails) and John Mirick (who also has done a lot of work with bog bridges) who helped with the bridging design.
- We discussed the usage of the West Trail. One purpose of walking this route with Deb is to get a better understanding of the suitability of the trail for horses. We believe that horses should be excluded due to the boggy land between the bridges. This will likely disappoint some town residents.
- **Voted:** We voted to spend money for legal notifications and certified letters for the Calamint Hill Conservation Areas work. Total amount is about \$120.
- Rick mentioned that we are exceeding our budget. He has discussed this with Jim Dunbar and is awaiting approval from Nina. If no approval we will privately fund the printing of the brochures.

6. Trail Summit

- Rick proposed to not do a trail summit per se, but to wait until a trail committee has come together. Acting independently from the OSC, Rick has contacted several people to see if they would be interested in forming a team to oversee trail work in town. The response has been positive.
- Rick will continue to bring a small team together, planned for February. There are several projects that can be looked at for this team:
 - i. Calamint Hill Cons Area trail development
 - ii. Goodnow Park
 - iii. Maintenance of existing DCR trails
 - iv. Maintenance and possible expansion of Boylston park trails
 - v. Bickford Pond Loop

In addition, this team will bring ideas for additional trails and will prioritize the connection.

The plan will be to hold a small organizational meeting first, and then invite the town to join the effort. At that time it may be good to have a presentation by one or more trail-related groups (OSC, Wachusett Mountain, Audubon, DCR, etc.)

- Rick feels that OSC should participate in this committee as a liaison to the town and volunteered to be the OSC rep. The team also needs to work with ConCom and Parks and Rec.

7. Meetings with Ed Carlson

- Rick met with Ed and explored some trails in town. Ed asked two questions to OSC:
 - i. There is an opportunity to construct a bridge over South Wachusett Brook as it flows into Quinapoxit Reservoir. This would cost some money but Ed is willing to donate. Is this a project that OSC would endorse? We decided that this is not a top priority for us, but we will suggest that Ed join the trail committee as he has a lot to offer in terms of knowledge of Princeton Trails.
 - ii. Ed asked if OSC would write a letter to support the group that is trying to limit expansion of the Fitchburg Land Fill into Leominster State Forest. We discussed this for a while. The Midstate trail team feels that this would be a good idea, since DCR is pledging to buy property to allow permanent protection of a section of the trail. However our sense is that the tradeoff is not adequate. Deb is going to investigate and compose a letter, and will also indicate that the OSC is not in favor of the expansion.

8. Recap of next steps:

- Rick: Lead walkthrough of Calamint Hill Trails and complete work with ConCom (or at least get to the Public Hearing stage). Setup walkthrough for Goodnow park. The second walkthrough (from Keyes Brook to Upper Gleason Road) will stay on the back burner for now.
- Kelton: Procure permission to use the Jonnie G trail through Clearing property.

- Deb will review Princeton Hikes! Brochure and arrange for Printing. Also follow up on returned landowner cards from the landowner info meeting. Write Letter opposing Landfill expansion.

9. Next meeting: Tuesday February 12 at 7PM in the Small CR.

10. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Gardner